

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2018-2369
Date: 15 November 2018



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

I refer to your recent request for information which has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

For ease of reference, your request is replicated below together with the response.

How many reports of domestic abuse has your force responded to since January 1, 2013?

I mean any incident reported on your 101, 999 and other reporting methods such as online. It is fine to include incidents responded by chance while on routine patrol.

How many victims did not support prosecution?

In how many cases did you seek to press charges despite the fact the victim did not support further action?

Police Scotland defines Domestic Abuse as:

“Any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse may be committed in the home or elsewhere including online”

This definition is included in the Joint Protocol between Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), “*In partnership challenging domestic abuse*” which is a public document that can be found at the Police Scotland website on <http://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/advice-for-victims-of-crime/domestic-abuse/reporting-domestic-abuse/> or on the COPFS website on <http://www.copfs.gov.uk/>.

To provide you with some context of the volume of domestic incidents reported in Scotland, in 2016/17 Police Scotland attended domestic incidents every 9 minutes. It is important to recognise that not every report made to police of a domestic incident becomes a crime. For example, a member of the public may report an incident which appears to be of a domestic nature however it involves persons who are not partners or ex-partners, or police may attend an incident which involves a disagreement but following a full and thorough investigations it is established it is not criminal in nature.

Tackling domestic abuse remains a priority for Police Scotland and we are committed to working with our partners to reduce the harm it causes and ultimately eradicate it. We proactively target perpetrators and support victims to prevent it damaging the lives of victims and their families including children, who too often witness the abuse.

It is recognised that Police Scotland statistics on reports of domestic abuse will not accurately reflect the levels of abuse experienced as many victims do not report domestic abuse. We understand that there are many complex reasons for this; the victim often does not recognise the abuse they are experiencing, they may minimise it or they are too frightened of consequences of reporting.

In response to your first question;

How many reports of domestic abuse has your force responded to since January 1, 2013?

The information you have requested for 2013/14 – 2016/17 is publicly available on the internet, therefore in terms of Section 16 and Section 25(1) of Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies: information is exempt information if it is otherwise accessible.

By way of assistance, the information you are seeking can be found using the following link:

(<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubDomesticAbuse>)

This is an absolute exemption and does not require the application of a public interest test.

In relation to the data requested for 2017/18 and 2018/19, the below information has been taken from the Police Scotland iVPD database. The iVPD is the formal means by which Police Scotland record police contact with adults, children and young people who are, or are perceived to be, experiencing some form of adversity and / or situational vulnerability, which may impact on their current or future wellbeing; or where force policy dictates. E.g. Domestic Abuse, Hate crime, youth offending or to record details of victim's rights under Section 8 and 9 of the [Victims and Witnesses \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#).

Recorded Domestic Incidents: Police Scotland

Period: Financial Years 2017/18 (01 April – 31 March) and 2018 (01 April– 30 Sept)

Year	2017/18	2018/19
TOTAL	59474	30143

All statistics are provisional and should be treated as management information. All data have been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as 17/10/2018.

Having considered your questions 2, 3 and 4 in terms of the Act, I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600 and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request.

As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

By way of explanation, to gather the information sought would require a manual review of 324,852 incidents. It is estimated that each incident would take an individual 5 minutes to check at a cost of £15 per hour would exceed the cost threshold.

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Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management - Glasgow on 01786 895867 quoting the reference number given.

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which Police Scotland has dealt with your request, you are entitled, in the first instance, to request a review of our actions and decisions.

Your request must specify the matter which gives rise to your dissatisfaction and it must be submitted within 40 working days of receiving this response - either by email to foi@scotland.pnn.police.uk or by post to Information Management (Disclosure), Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH.

If you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of that review, you are thereafter entitled to apply to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months for a decision. You can apply [online](#), by email to enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info or by post to Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS.

Should you wish to appeal against the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner's decision, there is an appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

As part of our commitment to demonstrate openness and transparency in respect of the information we hold, an anonymised version of this response will be posted to the Police Scotland Freedom of Information [Disclosure Log](#) in seven days' time.

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